The Sketch

No. 2549—Vol. CXCVI. WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 1942. ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE.

AMY JOHNSON—AND ANNA NEAGLE-AMY.

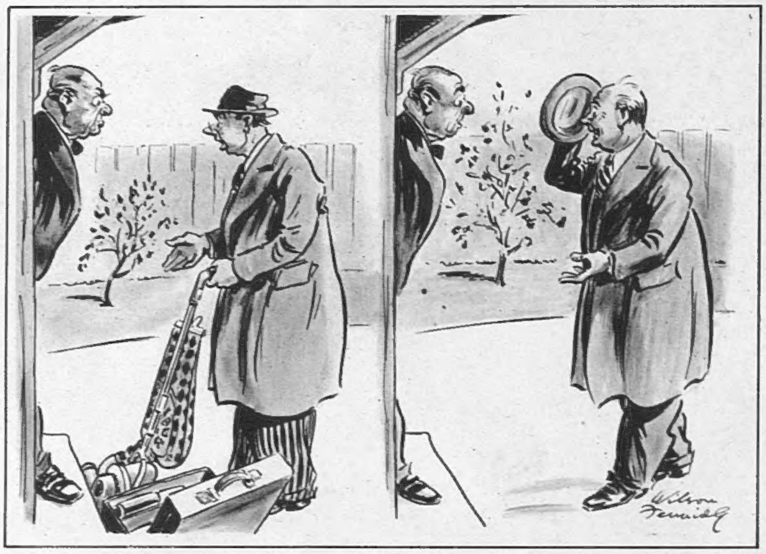
ANNA NEAGLE *plays Amy Johnson, C.B.E., in* "THEY FLEW ALONE," *at the Odeon. You can compare this still of her in the part with our camera study of the real Amy. In 1930 Miss Johnson, unknown girl pilot, left England in her 'plane and arrived in Australia at the end of her solitary, record-making journey, the most famous woman aviator of her day. She made many other records, including Japan and back in 1931; Cape Town and back in 1932, setting up new records; and regaining the London-Cape records in 1936. She married Jim Mollison (played by Robert Newton in the film) and with him set up the England-India record of twenty-two hours. She lost her life last year when on duty in the A.T.A. Other photographs elsewhere in this issue.*

CAMERA PORTRAIT OF AMY JOHNSON BY RUTH HOLLICK.

MOTLEY NOTES.

By ALAN KEMP.

Brave New World. It would be a worse world than it is if we did not constantly hope to make it a better world than it is; but I confess that I regard with dismay the large promises of a Brave New Post-War World which so many of our publicists are making on both sides of the Atlantic.



THEN AND NOW!

"Can I sell you a vacuum-cleaner, Sir?" *"Have you a vacuum-cleaner to sell, Sir?"*

DRAWN BY WILSON FENNING.

If millions of suffering people are really going to expect a world offering such narcotics as "freedom from want" and "freedom from fear," then they are expecting something which has never yet happened in human history, and is not likely to happen; since life itself was not designed to be free from fear. Whatever the issue of this war, the one thing certain is that there are stiff times ahead. A millennium does not happen in an instant and a staggering world does not recover its balance in the twinkling of an eye. This is not pessimism; it is the most elementary common sense. To cultivate the illusion that, as soon as the snake is scotched or killed, a good time will be had by all, is to court a reaction of disappointment which may take the form of appalling upheaval.

The Common Man.

According to that sapient informant, Mr. Raymond Gram Swing, the latest recruit to the ranks of the rosy-visioned prophets is the Vice-President of the United States. In his view, the object of victory is to make a world fit, not for heroes, but for the Common Man. I sincerely hope so. I have a great regard for the Common Man, though I am not quite sure that people always know what they mean by him, and as presented by certain writers he seems to me to become an abstract, academic type, like the Economic Man or the Mean Sensual Man. I am, I trust, a Common Man myself—we are all Common Men, because we happen to be made of Common Clay. But we are also, all of us, Uncommon Men, because no two of us are exactly alike, and there is no such person as the completely "normal" person. If, therefore, the Era of the Common Man (which, as a matter of fact, began long ago) means that everybody, irrespective of capacity or merit or even that incalculable thing called luck, is going to be ensured a safe, happy and comfortable existence—well, Mr. Vice-President, I suggest that you guess again. The experiment was tried by a Gilbertian king, who "to the top of every tree Promoted everybody." This was an early example of Social Planning, and the result, as you may remember, was that—

When everyone is somebody,
Then no one 's anybody!

Ex Cathedra. In this connection, and at a time when the most reverend of Reverend Prelates are volunteering economic theories which seem to have little relation to ecclesiastical duties, and which certainly will not bear a moment's serious analysis, it is refreshing to find that at least one Bishop raises his voice for realism and common sense. "It is the idealists, the faddists, the progressists, or whatever one may call them, who are reconstructing the world at the present time, and all intelligent people are engaged on doing their best to win the war. We want the intelligent people to advise us as to what has to be done in the future." If it is not disrespectful to say so, my Lord—hear, hear, with chromium plating on it!

Robbing the Nest. Meanwhile, until the Common Man enters into his paradise, he seems to suffer from certain frailties in which he has my entire sympathy, but which have been worrying that body of Uncommon Men, the House of Lords. It is certainly a pause-giving thought which Lord Arnold has left us to chew—that we common chaps and blokes, heaven forgive us, spend nearly a thousand million pounds a year on beer and tobacco. If, said this pitiless statistician, we cut off even half our beer, the barley thus released would keep eighteen million hens in luxury, and would produce four eggs per family. Oh, that man should put an enemy into his mouth to steal away his eggs! Personally, I have no defence. When statisticians bully me in this relentless way, I just put up my hands. It is a pity Mr. George Bernard Shaw is not in the House of Lords; one would like to hear his comments on these figures. Failing Mr. Shaw, perhaps Lady Astor would like to offer a few blisters and scorpions?

"Why the h—— don't they cut that balloon off and let her sink?"

DRAWN BY J. E. BROOME.

Chips and Chaps.

Another notorious weakness of the Common Man—probably costing another thousand millions, though not, so far as I know, a breaker-up of

happy homes—is that Dangerous Therapeutic Substance known as Fish and Chips. I call it dangerous, because it undoubtedly needs a strong constitution; but, given a tin-lined stomach, it is said to be highly nourishing. It has, however, suffered until recently from a certain (most undeserved) social stigma. Persons with an Old School Tie complex have hesitated to be seen emerging from the shop with a redolent and grease-dripping paper funnel of deep-fat fried, though from time to time a member of the Ruling Classes might be seen creeping furtively from some fishy haunt like a drunkard from his dram. Now the social dilemma is made more acute by the fact (as I understand) that you have to bring your own wrapping-paper. Either that, or, as they say in another honourable trade, the intoxicant must be consumed on the premises; for no person of nice feeling will or can take home an unwrapped fish supper to the family.

Out of the Frying-Pan. These problems have been squarely envisaged by the National Federation of Fish Friers. So little does one half the world know of the other half that I was unaware of the existence of this body. I had heard of Orders of Whitefriars and Blackfriars, but never of Fish Friers or Deep Friers. I apologise to the Brotherhood, and applaud its proclaimed policy, which is to raise the social status of fried fish. The Federation rightly looks forward to a time when the highest in the land will regale themselves on fried plaice with as little fear of social ostracism as if 'twere *sole Meunière*. I heartily support this movement, not because I have ever had any social prejudices in the matter, nor because I can easily assimilate fish and chips, but because I shall be driven to it if I have much more of this boiled cod. Meanwhile, I see that the price of fish and chips is to be regulated, and (I need hardly add) a Controller appointed. "O flesh, flesh, how art thou fishified!"

Sausages and Salvation. There is abundant fried fish in the United States, and I have no reason to doubt its quality or its nutritive properties (though the scientists, ever shattering illusions, now say that it is *not* brain-food); but in popularity I doubt whether it has ever rivalled the Hot Dog. This, as everybody knows, is a device for making the mysteries of a sausage doubly mysterious by wrapping them in bread. Lest any sinister speculations should remain, a final and generous coating of mustard suppresses all other flavours. The effect is admirable, if powerful, and many a time have I applauded it; indeed, one cannot do otherwise, for this is a sort of ordeal by fire applied to every Englishman in America, and to fail in it is to lose caste irreparably. I am happy to see that a clergyman in the Midlands is holding Midday Hot-Dog Services for the troops. The hot dog is held in one hand and the hymn-book in the other, and "Onward, Christian Soldiers" is sung between bites. A difficult technique, but an improvement on some church parades which I remember. There are many means of grace, and there is no reason why a sausage should not be one of them.

All for Pudding, and the World Well Lost! Hot dogs, ice-cream and water-melon have lured many a Tom Sawyer or Huckleberry Finn to deeds of shame; but who ever heard of a man ruining his career for a tapioca pudding? This happened the other day, however, to a chef of otherwise blameless character, who could not resist the fatal fascination of tapioca. You would think that such an one had seen so much tapioca in the course of his professional career that he would covet it about as much as he would lust after a sodden brussels sprout; but he *would* have that pudding, and it cost him £10, and his job. I find the incident rather touching. I picture this unfortunate cook day after day resisting temptation, averting his eyes from the milk puddings, trying to satisfy his morbid craving with sago, semolina or ground rice, till one day the demon hunger for tapioca is too much for him, and he indulges in one mad but glorious orgy. I should have let him off with a caution, and prescribed tapioca daily until he would scream at the mere sight of it.

"*Do 'ee really think it be worth the trouble, Ben, wi' the Canadians down 'ere an' all?*" (DRAWN BY SILENUS.)

Hiccuping lady: "*Sorry, dearie, it's them points!*"
DRAWN BY BEAUCHAMP.

Brer Rabbit. The subject of tapioca lures me on to other comestibles—I'm sorry, but it is quite impossible to keep off the subject. The other day in my club I was confronted with a dark and mysterious dish, which turned out to be curried seagulls' eggs—and very good I found it. Being a Man with an Inquiring Mind, I fell to wondering who collects seagulls' eggs, and how. It must be an exciting kind of Alpine sport, and I should very much like to meet a professional seagulls'-eggster. By a natural sequence of thought, I began to ponder on rabbits. Being, as I have explained, a Common Man, I esteem rabbits far above fish and chips, and infinitely above tapioca. There are as many, and as good, ways of cooking the cony as of cooking the chicken. But I am permanently rabbit-starved, because the Q Department of my household reports that it is quite impossible to obtain the creature. Simultaneously, I hear that all the farmers are being eaten out of crop and croppage by millions of insatiable rabbits. Rabbits pullulate, and I cannot get one for the larder! Now, Lord Woolton, is that right? Is it fair? Cannot the loyal troops be mobilised for an Invasion Exercise on the predatory rabbitry? Cannot the Home Guard be turned out for a nation-wide battue of bunnies? I do not admit that there is any reason to think that the casualties would be heavier among the Home Guard than among the rabbits. It seems absurd that a pest which can

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be turned into good food should be allowed to remain a pest. Brer Rabbit must laugh! He just "lays low and says nuffin'." Ah! I have it! Let 's appoint a Rabbit Controller!

Making Do. Let us also have a Substitute Controller, who will give us all sorts of ingenious suggestions for making bricks without straw. That is not really very difficult, for, as far as I know, good bricks contain no straw whatever; but there would be considerable advantages in being told how to make cakes or puddings or salads *with* straw. This business of "making do" is one of the exciting arts of wartime, and has lent a distinct savour to existence. A Countess is reported as having said recently that "old napkins make very smart collars." Feminine collars, I presume; but there is no reason why a little floral decoration should not greatly improve the rather unimaginative male choker. On the other hand, the French already use table-napkins as collars, and I cannot say that I have ever greatly admired the effect. I have just been reading an article on how to make bedroom slippers out of old hats. It is a pretty thought, but unfortunately there is no corresponding suggestion for making hats out of old slippers. Nor what to do with old boots, the wastage of which is shocking. The answer, I suppose, is that among true patriots no boot is now too old to wear. Then, again, it is always possible that somebody will discover a rich vitamin content in old boots, and certainly the dietary aspect of these hitherto despised objects seems to need attention.

The Little Man. If, as we are fond of telling the world, we are a nation of shopkeepers (Napoleon's word was *bourgeois*, which is not the same thing, and Hitler's, oddly enough is, "plutocrats"), one of the saddest things in this war is the eclipse of the small shopkeeper. He has had a hard time for many a long day past, being ever threatened with engulfment by Big Business; but he has managed to survive, and has represented a class of small capitalist who is, *pace* M. Stalin, a most valuable element of the community. His profits were never large, and in many cases they were bare subsistence (you have to sell a great many penn'orths of lollipops to make a living!), but they had the attraction, powerful to all right-minded men, of "being your own master." Throughout this war, I have marvelled how the little shops managed to keep going at all, since they had so little to sell. There have been heavy casualties, and now I see it estimated that no less than 50 per cent. of them must be written off. Will they ever come back? I wonder! They cause certain economists no pang, but the day may come when a standardised nation may mourn for them.

Equality of Sacrifice. The times we live in! The dear Vicar announced last Sunday: "Members of the congregation who propose to put buttons in the collection are requested to remove them from their own persons, and not from the church hassocks."

SCRAPS OF PAPER.

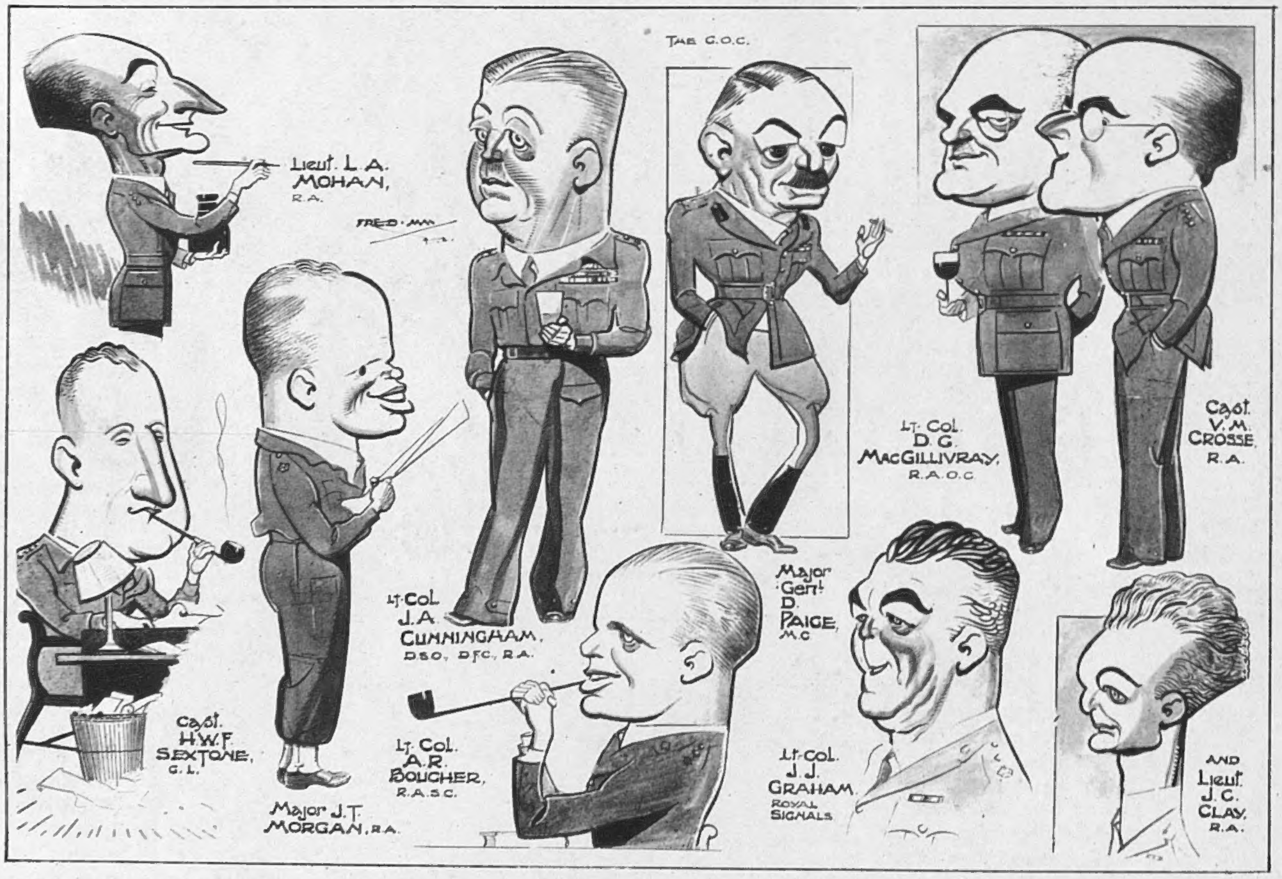
A "Scrap of Paper" had historic importance in 1914—every scrap of paper now has material value—for waste paper, cartons, letters, cardboard, cards and boxes are all essential for the war effort. They must be neither hoarded nor wasted. The £10,000 Prize Waste Paper Drive inaugurated by the Waste Paper Recovery Association for May, June and July will add further incentive to the energy with which our paper-saving activities are carried on, for borough, urban and rural council areas are competing for handsome sums, to be distributed for the benefit of local charities. Go to it and help your local district to win; and do your utmost to further the salvage of this all-important war material!

"No, we shan't require any of the usual accessories, nor a framed copy of the rules—it's purely for sleeping under."

DRAWN BY PITTS.

"After all, we don't want our children and our children's children to go through this sort of thing again!"

DRAWN BY A. E. BEARD.



When our artist called on the nth A.A. DIVISION, the Divisional General—Major-General Paige—was present, and was duly put on paper as you see. Colonel Cunningham, standing next him, has the distinction of being D.F.C. No. 1—the first winner of the D.F.C., in other words.

DRAWN BY FRED MAY.

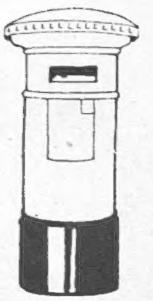
The thirty-eighth of our SERIES OF PLATES IN FULL COLOUR *published in this issue of "The Sketch" is by* DAVID WRIGHT.

"THAT GLASS, MISS, 'OLDS ABOUT AS MUCH AS WE 'AD TO WASH WITH IN LIBYA."

DRAWN BY FRANK REYNOLDS.

Please forward

By JOYCE DENNYS.



MY DEAR ROBERT—Bill and the Linnet have both had a few days' leave. It was lovely having them at home together. Luckily the weather was beautiful, and they spent nearly all their time lying on the roof, playing the gramophone to each other.

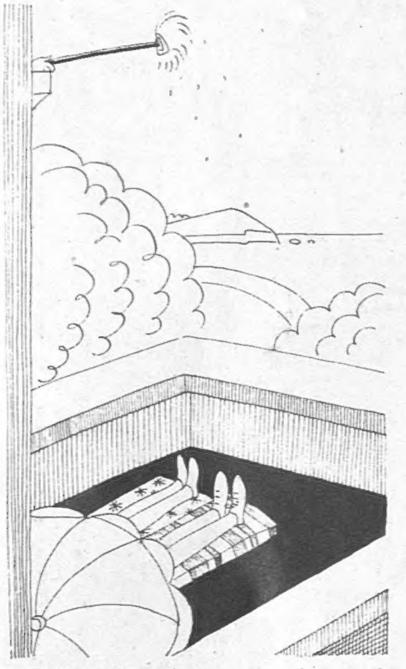
Since they left home our gramophone records have got rather behind the times. There is nothing in the world as sad as an old dance tune, and once or twice, while shaking the mop out of the bathroom window, and seeing them lying there in such pre-war abandon, I was moved almost to tears.

"What are you looking so miserable about?" shouted the Linnet.

"It's that tune about Smoke In My Eyes."

"Gosh!" said Bill. "It's so old you must almost have danced to it in your youth."

"Oh, no, Bill," said the Linnet seriously. "Not as old as all *that*."



"While shaking the mop out of the bathroom window . . ."

Children say this sort of thing. They don't mean it unkindly.

I said, "Do you think it is wise to have that orange umbrella open on the roof?"

"Why ever not?"

"Well, you might get machine-gunned."

Bill and the Linnet drew up their knees and rolled about in paroxysms of mirth.

As I cleaned the taps I thought how my children would laugh if they knew how frightened *I* was of being machine-gunned. It would be no exaggeration to say that the thought is seldom out of my mind, and when I take Perry for his Cliff Path walk my eyes dart hither and thither, choosing places where I might fling myself at the rattle of bullets.

Last week, when I was half-way up the Cliff Path, a sudden splutter overhead sent me headlong, like a Rugby Back, into the nearest doorway, which happened to be the entrance to the Men's Club. Colonel Simpkins, who happened to be coming out, stepped over me in some surprise.

"My dear Henrietta!" he said as he helped me to my feet.

I brushed the dust off the front of my coat, feeling foolish.

"What *were* you doing?" said Colonel Simpkins. Just then there was another rattle overhead. Colonel Simpkins looked up and then smiled kindly at me. "It's all right, you know; it's one of Ours," he said, patting my arm. "Not that it isn't a very sensible thing to do, Henrietta—very sensible indeed. We should always be ready for any emergency. By the way, I notice you are not carrying your gas-mask."

"I'm sorry."

"Keep it in your shopping basket, my dear. And now come and have some coffee with me." He took my arm. "In the last war," he said as we walked away, "I was home on seven days' leave, and as I was going down Piccadilly with Emmy one morning a car suddenly back-fired—and there was I, lying full-length on the floor of a tobacconist's shop. Emmy was very annoyed, I remember—very annoyed indeed."

There is something distinctly lovable about Colonel Simpkins.

Yesterday evening, while we were all four sitting round the fire, the Linnet suddenly said, "This house is getting very shabby."

"We're damned lucky not to have had it knocked down, so far," said Charles.

"My bedroom door won't keep shut now," said the Linnet.

"I'll speak to Missenden about it," I said absently, for I was interested in my book.

"Who?" said the Linnet, leaning forward.

"Nobody in particular," I mumbled, shuffling with my feet.

Bill and the Linnet exchanged meaning looks, and Bill gently took my book away from me and put it behind a sofa cushion. Ever since I was a child I have been in the habit of inventing people. Not exciting or extraordinary people, but just ordinary ones who are always charming and sometimes helpful. Charles, who considers this practice a harmless form of wishful thinking, ignores it, but Bill and the Linnet have always enjoyed gouging out their mother's little whimsies and exposing them to ridicule.

"Colonel Simpkins stepped over me."

"And what sort of dream-child is Missenden?" said the Linnet, putting her feet up on the sofa.

I took a deep breath. There was a time when I used to try and evade their merciless questioning, but I know now that it is wiser to tell them everything at once. "Missenden," I said, "is an Odd Job Man."

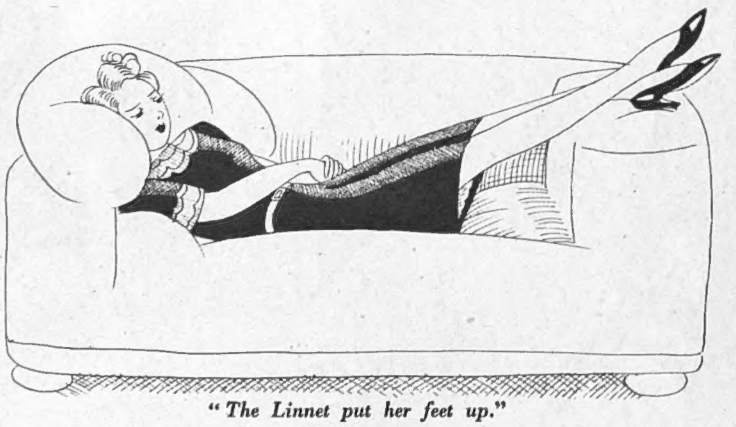
"What a whimsical Little Woman it is!" said Bill, putting his arm round me. "Go on."

"After the war he is coming to live in this house for three months."

"Where will he sleep?" said the Linnet, who has inherited a practical streak from her father.

"In Bill's room. Bill will not then be demobilised."

"Well, I'm damned!" said Bill. "Go on. What does he look like?"



"The Linnet put her feet up."

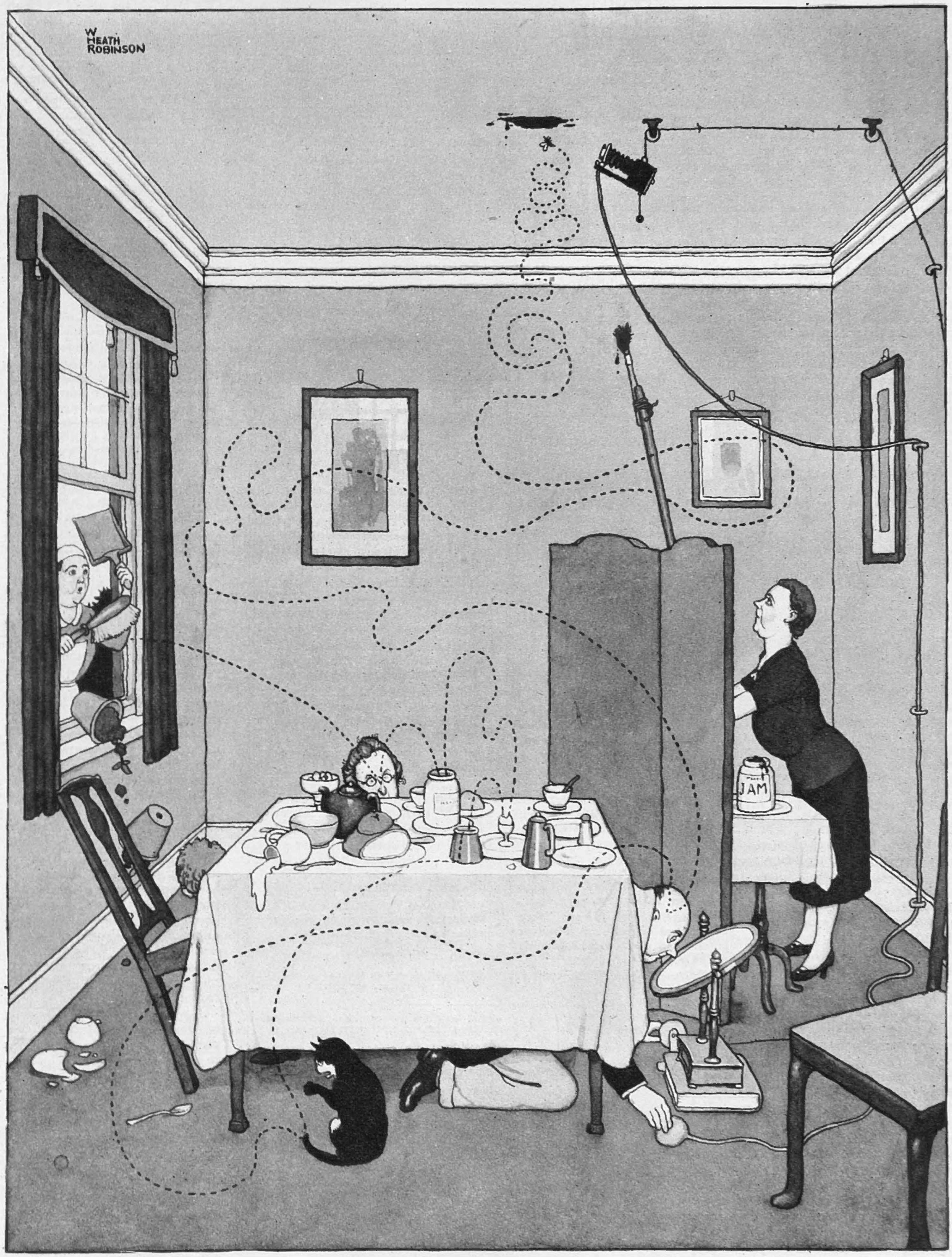
"He is a tall, thin man," I said, "with dreamy eyes and a white moustache, and he whistles softly as he works. He loves work. He simply loves it. He will put new tiles behind the kitchen sink, and mend Linnet's door, and see to that bit of plaster on the landing ceiling, and the linoleum in the hall, and the tap in the scullery, and——"

"The bathroom cupboard," said Charles from behind *The Times*, "and the window in the dining-room."

The children and I looked at each other in astonishment. Charles never joins in as a rule. The house must be even shabbier than I thought.

Always your affectionate Childhood's Friend,

HENRIETTA.



"THE SKETCH" STARTS ITS OWN BRAINS TRUST.—No. 1.

"HOW DOES A FLY LAND ON THE CEILING?" *is the first question which Mr. W. Heath Robinson answers pictorially in the new "Sketch" Brains Trust. Questions are invited from our readers, but we cannot guarantee to answer more than one query per issue.*

DRAWN BY W. HEATH ROBINSON.

CINEMA CAMEOS.

By C. A. LEJEUNE.

THERE is more than one lesson to be learnt from " THE NEXT OF KIN," that " hush-hush " film which will be generally released this week. The obvious lesson, the moral which the film sets out to point, is the danger of careless talk in wartime. But there is a technical lesson to be learnt from the piece as well—one that might be framed in gilt and hung up in every studio. That is, the value of unostentatious teamwork—of writers, director, unit and actors working together, not for any kind of individual kudos, but for the good of the job.

" Next of Kin " was never intended for the public to see. It was made to show to the troops and the Home Guard, as a warning against careless talk. The whole production, directly sponsored by the War Office, was an official secret. Major Sir Basil Bartlett, himself a security officer in France at the time of the German break-through, wrote the original story. Thorold Dickinson, who made that excellent screen version of " Gaslight," was brought in as director. Besides the regular actors, genuine Commandos were placed at the studio's disposal, and help was given by officers and men of the Worcestershire Regiment and other Army, Navy and Air Force units. It was only when the film was finished that the suggestion was made that the public, as well as the troops, might find it a useful lesson in security. After a few minor alterations, permission for general release was obtained from the Army Council.

The result is that the public are now able to peer into a secret that was never meant for them. They should find the experience not only salutary, but fascinating. For " Next of Kin," free of any kind of box-office convention, is one of the very best films ever made in this country. Since nobody concerned in it, from producer to crowd artist, had any reason to keep his eye on the box-office, everybody was able to keep his mind on the job.

" Next of Kin " is a full-length, imaginary story, showing how a raid on enemy territory, secretly prepared and carefully guarded, results in heavy casualties through breaches of security. Nobody deliberately gives anything away. Indeed, few of the " careless talkers " know much themselves of the operations they are betraying. Just a casual word in a bar, in a train, a soldier's hurried scrawl to his girl-friend, a cheery remark at a dance, provide the bits of the puzzle that the enemy puts together.

In the same way, the German secret service is shown as an organisation in which each agent knows his own piece of the puzzle. The brains higher up do the thinking—the little people simply supply their disconnected bits of evidence. A strip-tease dancer has a dresser (Mary Clare), who takes a motherly interest in her lady's Service friends. A Dutch refugee (Nova Pilbeam) works in a bookshop, and the bookseller (Stephen Murray) encourages her to spend her Sundays with her soldier sweetheart. The soldier can't give away any secrets, because he doesn't know himself where the brigade is going—" even the officers won't know until they get the mosaics " . . . But a dentist in Wimpole Street knows how to " borrow " the mosaics. And so the Germans are ready when the Commandos land. . . . " The objects of the raid have been achieved," announces the Voice of the B.B.C. " But "—the voice drops—" our own losses in men and craft were very heavy. The enemy had evidently been warned. The next of kin have been informed."

At no time does the film make the common mistake of underrating the enemy's thoroughness or exaggerating his characteristics. " The Next of Kin " isn't a cartoon or a melodrama. It is a sober, realistic and carefully documented picture. The spies are as they should be, and—as we feel, with a pang of terror—real spies are, inconspicuous, careful people, people you 'd meet a hundred times without suspecting. Best type of all, perhaps, is the part played by Mervyn Johns, " a very nice gentleman, bombed out of Cardiff." Everyone is sorry for little Mr. Davis, with his home and his small business (metal tubing) destroyed by enemy action. This pleasant, pathetic little person, medium size, medium colouring, medium everything, goes right through the film collecting his scraps of information. Nobody ever catches him. It is a shrewd and particularly sinister touch that gives him the last shot of the picture, lighting cigarettes for another pair of careless talkers (Basil Radford and Naunton Wayne).

Amy Johnson fans, the thousands who followed the exploits of that dashing pioneer with breathless interest, will find their heroine well done by in " THEY FLEW ALONE " (Odeon), the officially-sanctioned biography of the Johnson-Mollison career and marriage. Anna Neagle plays Amy Johnson. You don't think Anna looks like Amy ? Neither do I. In spite of constant assurances from the director, Herbert Wilcox, that photographs of Anna and photographs of Amy could hardly be told apart, I see in Miss Neagle's interpretation of the rôle less an imitation than a symbol. Anna, I feel, is never really pretending to be Amy. She is merely recreating in her own person the type of mind, the type of courage, that her researches into Amy's personal life have suggested to her. What emerges from the film, above all else, is a study of a free and indomitable spirit, a woman whose public fame was won at the cost of intense private suffering. It is an enormously sympathetic portrait that Miss Neagle has given here, whether of Amy Johnson or of some other. I doubt if the actress has ever done anything more honest or more touching in her long career.

I wish the film itself were as well done as Miss Neagle's part in it. Perhaps the events it chronicles are too close to our own lives to be seen yet in true perspective. Perhaps the very possession of so much authentic Johnsoniana—news-reel shots, newspaper clippings, personal relics—have proved too strong a temptation for a conscientious director. At any rate, " They Flew Alone " seems to me less of an ordered drama than a rather scrappy juxtaposition of records.

We meet Amy-Anna first as a schoolgirl at Hull, leading a revolt against the wearing of stiff straw hats. We glimpse briefly her tentative gropings for a career, in business college, office, store. We hear of her hankerings after flight, see her as a grimy mechanic at Stag Lane, and watch her set off for her solo trip to Australia, an unknown girl in a second-hand " Moth." After mile upon mile, it seems, of newspaper headlines, Amy-Anna reaches Australia, and there she meets Fate in the person of pilot Jim Mollison (Robert Newton), who flies her to a civic reception and her Doom. I use the words " Fate " and " Doom " advisedly, for that is the aspect of the Johnson-Mollison affair that scenario-writer Miles Malleson has deliberately emphasised. " I have tried,"

THE BEST THEATRES.

*Starred by " The Sketch."   ***=highest value.*

** Adelphi : " THE DANCING YEARS." Ivor Novello in his romantic musical play, with Muriel Barron and Roma Beaumont.

** Aldwych : " WATCH ON THE RHINE." Diana Wynyard ; Anton Walbrook ; Athene Seyler and Judy Campbell. Anti-Nazi family in the U.S.A.

** Apollo : " OLD ACQUAINTANCE." Edith Evans in John van Druten's pla . Perfect acting.

* Coliseum : " MAID OF THE MOUNTAINS." Revival, with Sonnie Hale ; Elsie Randolph.

*Duchess : " SKYLARK." Well-acted comedy. Constance Cummings ; Hugh Sinclair.

**Garrick : " WARN THAT MAN." Gordon Harker foils a Fifth Columnist.

** Globe : " THE MORNING STAR." Emlyn Williams in his own raid-nights play. Angela Baddeley.

**Haymarket : " THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA." Vivien Leigh in a Shavian revival. Well cast.

**Hippodrome : " GET A LOAD OF THIS." George Black's surprise musical. Vic Oliver ; Jeanne Ravel ; Celia Lipton.

* His Majesty's : " BIG TOP." Cochran's latest, with Beatrice Lillie, Cyril Ritchard, Fred Emney, Madge Elliott, Patricia Burke.

** Lyric : " BLOSSOM TIME." Richard Tauber sings in a Rodney Ackland play on Schubert.

** Palace : " FULL SWING." Cicely Courtneidge and Jack Hulbert at their best.

** Palladium : " GANGWAY." George Black's Musical Smile ; with Tommy Trinder ; Bebe Daniels ; Ben Lyon.

***Piccadilly : " BLITHE SPIRIT." Noel Coward brings two ghost wives back to earth. Fay Compton ; Kay Hammond ; Cecil Parker ; Margaret Rutherford.

* Prince of Wales : " HAPPIDROME." B.B.C. success put on the stage by George Black.

*St. James's : " THE NUTMEG TREE." Comedy with Yvonne Arnaud.

*St. Martin's : " ROOKERY NOOK." Revival, with Ralph Lynn.

**Saville : " FINE AND DANDY." Good show with Leslie Henson, Stan. Holloway, Dorothy Dickson, Douglas Byng.

***Savoy : " THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER." Brilliant boorishness by Robert Morley.

*Strand : " REBECCA." Revival, with Owen Nares.

* Vaudeville : " SCOOP ! " New revue with Henry Kendall ; Joan Swinstead ; Patricia Leonard ; Arthur Young and Swingtette.

** Victoria Palace : " TWENTY TO ONE." Laugh-making racing musical play. Lupino Lane ; Greta Fayne ; Winifred Sloane.

** Whitehall : " OTHER PEOPLE'S HOUSES." Superb evacuee comedy. Olga Lindo ; Phyllis Dare.

*Windmill: Non-stop revudeville.

*Wyndham's : " QUIET WEEK-END." Sequel to " Quiet Wedding."

N.B.—While we shall always do our best to keep this list up to date, we cannot hold ourselves responsible for any errors which may occur. Consult your daily paper ; ring up the theatre, to avoid disappointment.

"Bedtime Story" (Regal) is the comedy of a playwright, Lucius Drake (FREDRIC MARCH), *whose determination to thwart the efforts of his actress-wife Jane* (LORETTA YOUNG) *to escape from the footlights to a life of domesticity via Reno and re-marriage to Eddie Turner* (ROBERT BENCHLEY; *centre*) *end in his wrecking the honeymoon by staging it to suit his new play.*

he tells me, "to give the film a kind of Greek tragedy *motif*. Here are two people whom the gods never intended to come together. Alone each is great. Together they never made a success. The audience should feel that the marriage is doomed from the moment they try to make a joint career of it."

On the screen, this theory is put into the mouth of Father Johnson (Edward Chapman), who shakes his head over the Mollison marriage from the beginning. Sadly he and the audience watch Amy-Anna and Bob-Jim drift together, drift along in a series of jinxed flights to America and elsewhere, and drift apart when Bob-Jim shows too much partiality for the social whirl. At last, after divorce has separated them (again in a newspaper headline), Amy-Anna becomes a ferry-pilot for the A.T.A., and on the day of her death re-encounters Bob-Jim, also in A.T.A. uniform. The film ends with a forced landing over the Thames by parachute on that foggy afternoon in January, and a sequence which I cannot admire, a kind of ghostly montage of Amy-Anna and Thames water and a parade of all the women of the Services.

"They Flew Alone" is a film which will be remembered, and deserves to be, for Miss Neagle's performance, but it leaves much to be desired as a piece of technical craftsmanship. I suppose the private lives of the flying Mollisons may have been as restless and disorganised as the piece indicates, but a quiet note, a breathing-space here and there, might well have made for a better picture. As it is, "They Flew Alone" comes nearest to drama when it is least ambitious, when it gets the Mollisons into an aeroplane and simply shoots down on them. The joint flight to America, I thought, was intensely moving, and that first meeting in Australia, with Jim flying the sleepy heroine to her civic welcome, was very nicely done.

"BEDTIME STORY" (Dominion and New Victoria)—a title which means absolutely nothing, by the way—presents Loretta Young and Fredric March in a comedy of theatre people and their marriage problems. Miss Young is looking quite ravishing these days, in deep V necklines to show her long white throat, and with her hair in heavy rolls at the nape, the way she learnt as a ballerina in "Men in Her Life." She appears as a temperamental actress in this piece, the No. 1 lady of the Broadway stage. Her current whim, it seems, is to retire into domesticity on a Connecticut farm, and when thwarted by her playwright husband—who simply can't stop writing successful plays for her—she goes off to Reno in a huff. The attempts of this irrepressible author to get her back, to stop her marrying a banker, or at least to prove the second marriage null and void, lead to a climax of very pretty farce. This is a wedding-night scene with a difference, a riot in an hotel bedroom, with the playwright sending up chambermaids, electricians, plumbers, decontamination squads and waiters with chicken dinners, until the lady breaks down and admits that he is the only playmate for her.

Barry Kane (ROBERT CUMMINGS), *aircraft worker of "Saboteur" (Leicester Square), tries to convince Patricia Martin* (PRISCILLA LANE) *that the charges against him are false. To Patricia, the handcuffs on his wrists are damning evidence. "Saboteur" is an Alfred Hitchcock production.*

"Sweater Girl" (Carlton) is the story of a college revue, rehearsals for which are interrupted by a murder. JUNE PREISSER, EDDIE BRACKEN, ELLA NEAL *and* BETTY JANE RHODES *are some bright young collegians involved.*

Collectors of new film faces should be interested in "THIS GUN FOR HIRE" (Plaza), which presents a young man named Alan Ladd as the latest thing in—what shall we say?—retributive killers. Mr. Ladd plays a victim of circumstance here, a clear case for a psychiatrist—a man who, brutally treated in childhood, early gets the taste for blood and can't get it out of his system. It is a meaty rôle for a young man in his first screen job, and Mr. Ladd takes full advantage of it. His relentless, unsmiling pursuit of the big shot who has double-crossed him—paying for his services in "hot" money to set the police on his track—is all the more convincing because he never plays for sympathy.

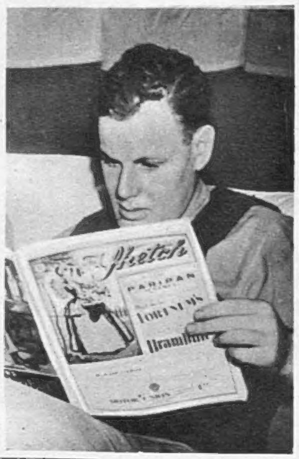
Personality, indeed, riots in "This Gun for Hire," since Laird Cregar and Veronica Lake—whom no one can call just dull—are also in the cast. Miss Lake plays a night-club entertainer who is betrothed to a detective in her spare time, and Mr. Cregar is a regular bad hat, a Fifth Columnist in the pay of the Japs. Everyone is delighted when he meets his doom, and even the sardonic killer smiles for the first time. Among these three highly-coloured personalities, Robert Preston, as the detective, drifts rather dimly—a nice young man, one feels, but little more.

" STINKER " MURDOCH, *familiar to radio listeners, and now an Intelligence Officer, is handing the squadron mascot, Thirsty, to one of a bomber crew. Thirsty is a veteran who has made many operational flights over enemy territory.*

MR. GILBERT MITCHELL, MRS. MITCHELL *and Land Girl* MISS GRACE LILIAN HARRISON *have been decorated for carrying on the work on Reach Court Farm, in spite of the gunfire and air attacks of the enemy. Mr. Mitchell has received the George Medal, and his wife and Miss Harrison the British Empire Medal.*

Left: MISS ELIZABETH CHARRINGTON'S *marriage to Major Rollo Hoare, R.A., younger son of Mr. Henry and Lady Geraldine Hoare, is fixed for June 6.*

Right: America has become "one big flying field for future Allied airmen." Every home comfort is provided for cadets, so, of course, they get "The Sketch" to read—and do they enjoy it!



These M.T.C. Drivers are in charge of a Queen's Messengers Food Flying Convoy consisting of a tanker containing water, a mobile kitchen, canteens, stores, and a staff car which proceed at call to any bombed area. They were at Bath.

OLIVE *and* PHYLLIS KENWAY, *twins from Forest Hill, are a perpetual problem at the A.T.S. Depôt where they are stationed. Maybe Rusty the cat knows the difference, but we doubt it.*

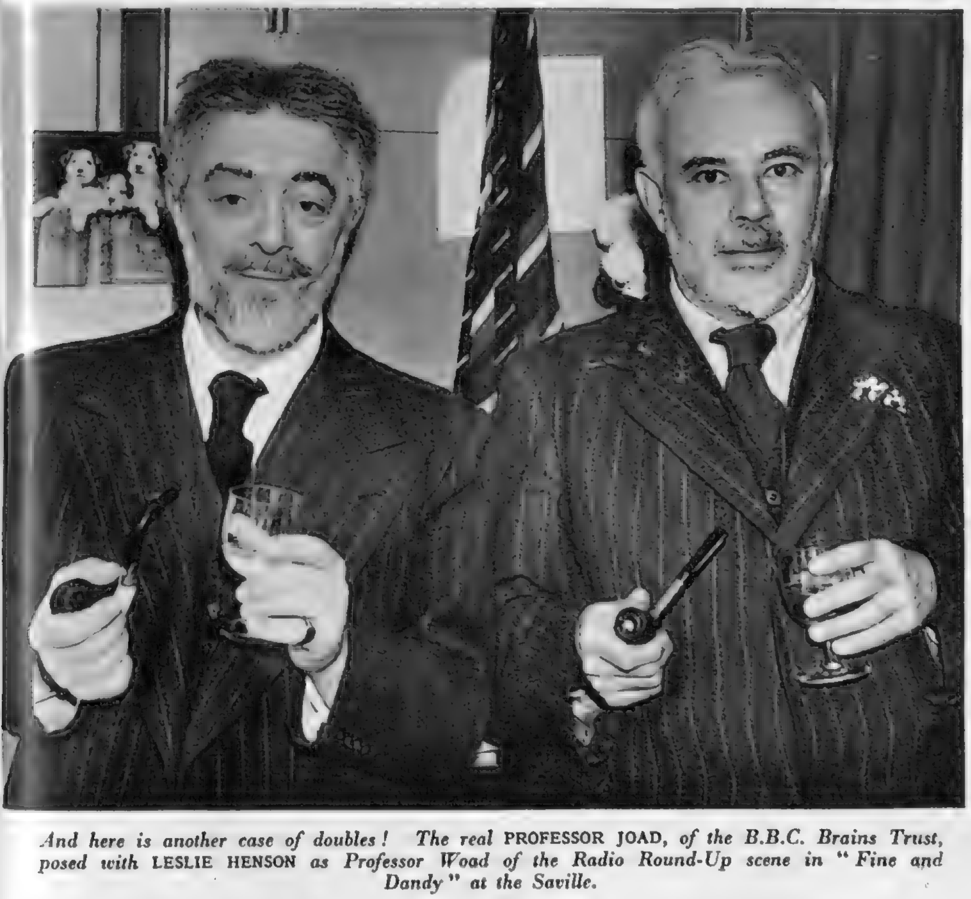
WEDDINGS, ENGAGEMENTS, AWARDS, DOUBLES,

The marriage of MR. HENRY SPUNNER LANGSTAFF, *Royal Horse Artillery, to* MISS PATRICIA MARGARET NORRIS, *elder daughter of Lieut.-Colonel J. S. Lapage Norris, took place at Dunblane Cathedral, Perthshire.*

The marriage of CAPTAIN *the* MASTER OF FORBES, *only son of Lord Forbes, to the* HON. ROSEMARY KATHERINE HAMILTON-RUSSELL, *only daughter of the late Viscount Boyne, at the Guards' Chapel.*

Left: The engagement of MISS PAMELA MARION GLYNNE PERCY, *elder daughter of Mr. J. E. Glynne Percy, to Major Nigel Barrington Baird has been announced.*

Right: The engagement of MISS ELIZABETH MORANT, *only daughter of the late Mr. Edward Morant, and of Lady Kathleen Hare, to Major Walter John Landells, R.A., second son of Mr. Walter Landells, has been announced.*



And here is another case of doubles! The real PROFESSOR JOAD, *of the B.B.C. Brains Trust, posed with* LESLIE HENSON *as Professor Woad of the Radio Round-Up scene in "Fine and Dandy" at the Saville.*

MISS GERTRUDE LAWRENCE, *with her husband,* LIEUT. RICHARD ALDRICH. *Miss Lawrence arranged to take a theatre for "Gratefully Yours," the revue performed by evacuated children of British actors.*

A HAPPY CADET, AND QUEEN'S MESSENGERS.

FROM HOME, SHOP, AND COUNTER—THE WOMEN HAVE GONE TO IT!

Girls from every walk of life are working in munition factories. Here's MISS HILDA DICKSON, formerly a "Nippy"—now expert at operating a giant drop stamp-hammer.

ONE of the most interesting features of the recruitment of women for the munition factories of this country is the variety of types who have become skilled hands. The neat fingers of dressmakers or tailoresses have quickly learned to operate machine tools, and housewives, manageresses of businesses, domestic servants and leisured women have all taken to their new trades with remarkable adaptability.

MISS DOROTHY BOXALL *(l.)* and MISS DOROTHY SULMAN *are busy with the wing of a "Spitfire" which has come in to the factory for repairs. One girl was formerly in domestic service, and the other a skilled tailoress.*

Formerly manageress of a confectioner's and tobacconist's, MISS DORIS GREEN *(l.) is working with* MRS. G. BARRINGTON, *a former housewife, on repairs to a "Spitfire" which has suffered damage in battle.*

MRS. CECILY LATHAM, *of the Aeronautical Inspection Directorate, is examining repair work done to the engine of an aeroplane. Her husband is a captain in the Army, and before the war she had never undertaken any work.*

MRS. ELSIE FROST *was a London dressmaker. She is now employed in a "hospital" for damaged 'planes, where battle-scarred fighters are made airworthy again.*

THE pictures on this page include striking photographs of girls who have learnt to become "nurses" at a "hospital" for damaged fighter aircraft in a civilian repair factory. All work they carry out is inspected by an R.A.F. test pilot before the 'planes go back again to the battle line.

MRS. McCARTHY, *formerly a tailoress, is at work repairing the cockpit of a "Spitfire."*

WE TAKE OFF OUR HAT TO—

KATHARINE HEPBURN, for being the best worst cook ever seen.

"Woman of the Year" gives KATHARINE HEPBURN *her best vehicle so far. Playing opposite Spencer Tracy, she is in her element as a brilliant news columnist with a first-rate sense of her own importance, married to a sports reporter. But when she makes a mess of trying to cook him a breakfast with taps, stove, coffee, eggs and electric gadgets all out to beat her, Katharine's acting is "the tops."*

PHOTOGRAPH BY CECIL BEATON.

COMMANDER PAULINE GOWER, M.B.E.,
O.C. Women's Section.

FLIGHT CAPTAIN CROSSLEY.

FIRST OFFICER ANN DOUGLAS.

FIRST OFFICER BARBARA WOJTU-
LANIS.

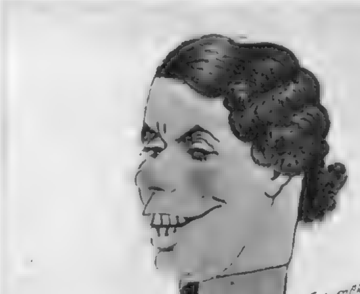
FIRST OFFICER HONOR I. SALMON.

" HULLO! HULLO! ATTENTION, PLEASE! TAXI 'PLANE

FIRST OFFICER LEATHART.

FIRST OFFICER MARY HUNTER.

CAPTAIN WILBERFORCE.



THIRD OFFICER CHOLMONDELEY.

THE job of an " A
women's sectio
Auxiliary is probably
war work undertaken
training has been c
attained the required
have to be ready to
any type of aircraft
destination. The Ata
collects her chits on w
destination and type
and off she goes by
aircraft. She has no
herself that night;
different mess every
bomber, or, when out
all night in the cor
Commander Pauline
Women's Section, is a
Captain Crossley was
circles before the w
Wojtulanis and First
in the Polish Air Forc
from their country w
Germans. First Offic
First Officer Joan Hu
in the film " Ferry P
pion. First Officer R
war, well known i

READY TO FLY ANY 'PLANE ANYWHERE: SOME OF

CARICATU

N.B. Colour plate inserted in this issue.

FLIGHT CAPTAIN MARGARET M. EBBAGE, *Instructor.*

FIRST OFFICER LOIS BUTLER.

FIRST OFFICER AUDREY SALE-BARKER.

FIRST OFFICER JOAN HUGHES.

WTING FOR PILOTS SMITH, JONES, ROBINSON AND BROWN."

FIRST OFFICER ANNA LESKA.

FIRST OFFICER RUTH MOORE, *Instructor.*

iirl" or member of the f the Air Transport e most thrilling of all women. After their ointed and they have ficiency, the Atagirls jj into the cockpit of il fly it solo to any gi rrives each morning, h re written her name, ircraft to be ferried, t plane to collect her. i where she will find n he may lunch in a d, hitch-hike home by f t, sit on her parachute c of a crowded train. wer, M.B.E., O.C. d guished pilot; Flight a well known in flying r First Officer Barbara er Anna Leska were escaped with 'planes e was overrun by the le-Barker, who, with g, took a leading part o is the ski-ing champ- t Moore was, before the e motoring world.

FIRST OFFICER VERONICA INNES.

FIRST OFFICER URSULA PRESTON.

FIRST OFFICER THE HON. ELIZABETH MAY.

IE "ATAGIRLS," OR WOMEN MEMBERS OF THE A.T.A.

BY SAMMY.

"THIS ABOVE ALL": BEST-SELLER WAR-STORY FILM.

A London air raid—reconstructed in Hollywood: a graphic presentation of the damage in one of our worst "blitzes."

A.R.P. services in action on the Hollywood set: fire engines at work on ruined and burning buildings.

JOAN FONTAINE *as Aircraftwoman Prudence Cathaway, entering a London pub with Monty* (THOMAS MITCHELL).

JOAN FONTAINE *as Prue. She made big hits in "Suspicion" and "Rebecca."*

ERIC KNIGHT'S best-seller wartime novel, "This Above All," has been filmed by Twentieth Century-Fox, with Joan Fontaine, Tyrone Power and Thomas Mitchell in the leading rôles. General Cathaway's granddaughter, Prudence, has joined up as an Aircraftwoman. She falls in love with Clive Briggs, whom she meets on a "blind date" arranged by a friend. The origins and backgrounds of the lovers are very different, and Prue realises that there is a mystery about Clive. He is not in uniform and has nervy fits. She discovers that he is absent without leave—not from cowardice, as he came heroically through Dunkirk—but because he does not want to die for the Old Order in England. She and Monty persuade him to rejoin his unit. He gets a day's respite to marry Prue, but is mortally injured in an air raid when rescuing buried civilians. The reconstruction of one of London's worst air raids is a remarkable piece of filmcraft.

WEARING THE BADGE OF THE GRENADIER GUARDS—PRINCESS ELIZABETH, COLONEL.

Last week PRINCESS ELIZABETH *inspected the Grenadier Guards, of which she was appointed Colonel last February. This is her first official position and her introduction to the Army, and for the first time in its history this famous regiment has a lady for its Colonel.*

As Marie Lloyd, PRIVATE HELEN McMELLON *sings "My Old Man said Follow the Van," in a nostalgic turn called "Music Hall Memories."*

"Another Convoy has Arrived Safely" is the final scene in one of the most successful productions of Garrison Theatre.

GARRISON REVUE— "STRIKE UP THE BAND."

ARMED with a great deal of talent, the Garrison Entertainment Committee presented recently a new original revue at the Royal Artillery Theatre, somewhere in England. "Strike up the Band" was produced by Lieut. Fred Pollitt, R.A., and its patrons received it with the greatest enthusiasm.

Star of the show is PRIVATE ROSALIND FIRMIN *(London Motor Company, A.T.S.), daughter of Colonel and Mrs. Firmin, and an accomplished variety artist. Her turn came in for a great deal of applause.*

In a scene called "Midnight in Montmartre," GUNNER TOM GLASS, R.A., *sings in the background.*

"Almost a Dramatic Recitation,"— one of the sketches which brought the house down, with (l. to r.) LIEUT. FRED POLLITT *(the producer),* LIEUT. P. A. J. TIBBALLS, R.A.O.C., PRIVATE E. BURLTON, R.A.M.C., PRIVATE E. ROSS, R.A.S.C.

PRIVATE ERIC ROSS, R.A.S.C., *and* LIEUT. FRED POLLITT, R.A., *collaborated in "Old Soldiers Never Die," an amusing sketch of to-day and yesterday.*

A familiar sight to Londoners during the autumn of 1940: a little girl hugging her toys as she stands in the ruins of her home.

Carol Bennett tries to telephone to her newspaper office while the raid is in full swing: VALERIE HOBSON *in a poignant sequence.*

BATTLE OF BRITAIN PICTURE—"UNPUBLISHED STORY."

"UNPUBLISHED STORY," due at the Regal on Sunday next, June 7, is set in the critical weeks of the Battle of Britain, in the late summer and early autumn of 1940. The London "blitz" is reconstructed with terrifying accuracy—for instance, the child shown in the ruined house comes from a bombed area and the débris is the authentic rubble to which someone's home was reduced by the *Luftwaffe.* The story tells how Bob Randall, war correspondent who came through Dunkirk, tracks down a suspicious Peace Organisation and proves it to be a Nazi-controlled Fifth Column affair. There are exciting sequences of spy-hunting and also of air-raid gallantry and the British spirit of carrying on in spite of "blitz" and bomb.

Right: The paper must go to press, though the editorial office has been "blitzed" and the editor wounded: Carol (VALERIE HOBSON) *and Bob Randall* (RICHARD GREENE) *arrive at the office.*

Bob Randall gets on with the job in spite of the "blitz": sending his story to the office by 'phone in the middle of London's first night raid, September 7, 1940.

Two minutes before opening time—and business will be as usual: a customer arrives at his favourite pub after a heavy raid the night before.

In "PLUTO JUNIOR" *Walt Disney introduces a charming member of the younger generation of his animals.*

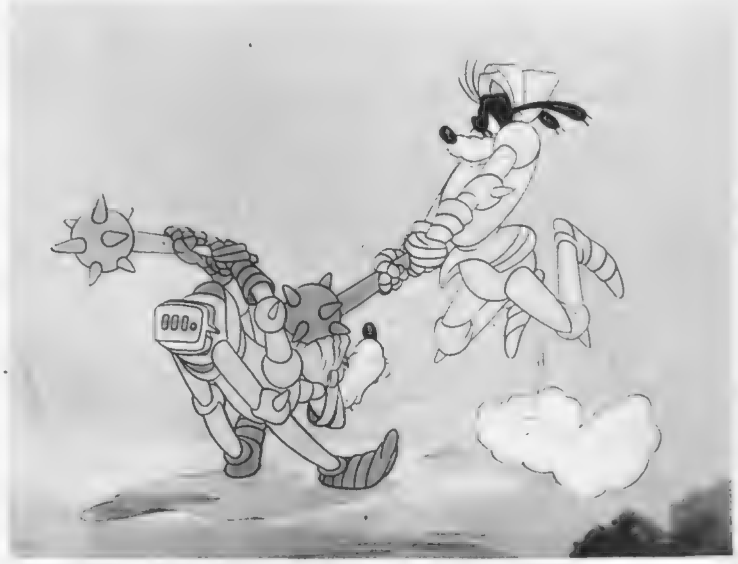
"Pluto Junior" takes an aerial flight through getting pegged by the slack of his neck on to a clothes-line!

"LEND A PAW" *features an enchanting kitten. This dramatic sequence shows the bad and good sides of Pluto's nature fighting a strenuous battle.*

YOUNGER GENERATION DISNEY PICTURES.

WALT DISNEY'S new short films include two in which members of the younger generation of his famous animals are successfully introduced, "Pluto Junior" and "Lend a Paw." The latter is particularly full of comic invention. In "The Art of Self-Defence" Goofy and his brother illustrate the different forms of single combat from the days of the Cave-men to modern times.

In "THE ART OF SELF-DEFENCE" *Goofy and his brother illustrate fighting through the ages. They start off as cave-men.*

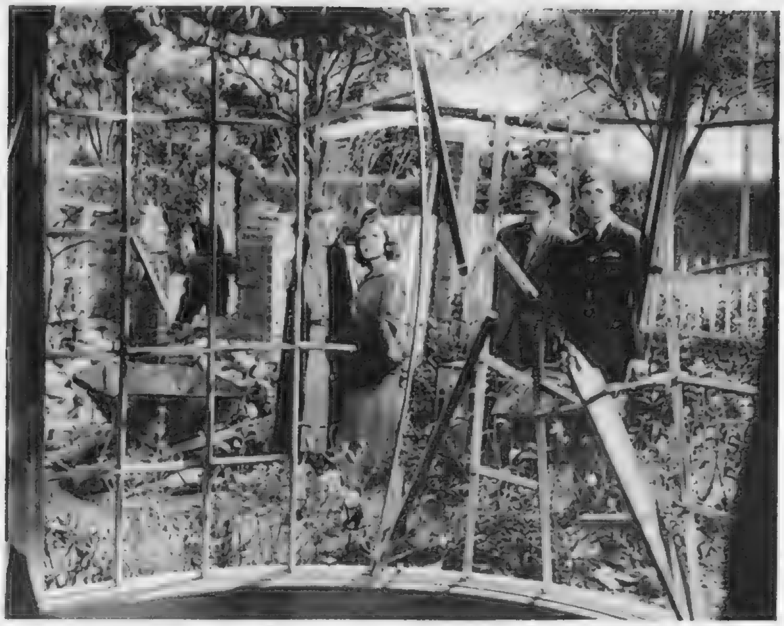


Armed combat in the Middle Ages! The Goofy brothers do a little work with heavy maces.

Goofy gets busy under Queensberry rules: a fine shadow-show exhibition of boxing, by the famous Disney animal.

GOOFY FIGHTS THROUGH THE AGES.

THE MINIVERS AND THEIR CIRCLE FILMED.



Inspecting the bomb damage at Starlings: Mrs. Miniver (GREER GARSON), *Carol Beldon* (TERESA WRIGHT), *Clem* (WALTER PIDGEON), *and Vin* (RICHARD NEY) *(l. to r.).*

Clem and Mrs. Miniver attend the village church with their tall son Vin and young children, Judy and Toby (CHRISTOPHER SEVERN).

MRS. MINIVER, whose mild adventures and characteristically British, conventional upper middle-class viewpoint were admirably chronicled by Jan Struther in her "Mrs. Miniver" articles (written for "The Times" and subsequently published in book form), has become a screen star. M.-G.-M. has just completed a picture introducing her and her husband Clem, and their children, Vin, Judy and Toby. The film is not the book, but the characters are true Miniveens and the atmosphere which charmed so many readers in England and in America has been successfully recaptured, and given a war flavour.

Left: GREER GARSON *as Mrs. Miniver, the character created by Jan Struther in her "Times" articles.*

The Minivers face war damage. Clem and Mrs. Miniver framed in the broken casements of a window in their bombed country home, Starlings.

Foley (REGINALD OWEN), *Lady Beldon* (DAME MAY WHITTY), *and Carol Beldon* (TERESA WRIGHT) *in one of the sequences of the new M.-G.-M. film.*

Unconventional portrait of Clem and Mrs. Miniver as they appear in the film which introduces the characters created by Jan Struther.

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

By L. P. HARTLEY.

War and peace is the subject of Mr. Stuart Cloete's long, leisurely romance of South Africa in the 1880's. A tremendous theme, and one that has been discussed and illustrated in what is perhaps the greatest novel of all time. The last war, as we all remember, produced a notable crop of war novels, but in the main they were not philosophical in outlook. Their authors had been for the most part horrified and appalled by their experiences. They recorded, with a terrible distinctness, the sights, smells and sounds of the battlefield and the mental and physical anguish of those engaged thereon. But they seldom illuminated anything else; they did not relate these experiences, except in a haphazard way, to a general conception of man's lot upon earth. And for that reason, perhaps, few of their books are read to-day.

The First Boer War. In the period of which Mr. Cloete writes wars were still local and divisible. The First Boer War, which ended disastrously for us at the Battle of Majuba, only involved a few thousand men. Also, if Mr. Cloete's account is accurate, it was fought in a different spirit from the wars of our century. There was killing, but no organised hatred, and representatives of two nations might meet as friends before a battle. Certain rules and conventions were strictly observed; thus, when Stoffel, the heroine's brother, shoots an Englishman who is swimming across a river, he is denounced by the Boers as a murderer. In the main, the relations between the Boer farmers and the English soldiers against whom they fought represent a wound in human solidarity, not a break or an amputation; and both sides are confident that when the fighting is over the scars will heal. It is this confidence that helps Lena and Dirk, whose marriage the war has postponed, to preserve unchanged their love for each other. Of course, she is tormented and anxious; he may be killed; but the months of separation, which intensify her longing for him, do not bring with them any form of war neurosis such as might disable or infect her spirit. Life on the farm goes on, its slow rhythm only jolted by news of battles; her relatives, all men and women of marked characteristics, become ever more themselves, while Oupa, the doyen of the household, once mighty hunter and indefatigable husband, draws nearer to his century. An unusually large proportion of the characters in the story are old people: the author never tires of insisting on their persistence, their instinct for survival, while the younger ones share with the farm animals an unflagging zest for reproducing their kind. The home scenes of the book have an atmosphere that suggests a cowhouse or a swamp, so warm and soft and fecund is it. But not at all sentimental: I should be wrong if I suggested it was that.

The Two Principles. At home, then, life is being sheltered and cherished and renewed; away on the veldt it is being injured and destroyed. The two principles, of destruction and reproduction, make a kind of antiphony, each offering the other a contradiction that is also somehow an answer, each making clear, as it were, the other's point. The book's title, "The Hill of Doves," is a translation of the native word "Majuba," and another battle, by an extraordinary coincidence, was fought on a hill of the same name. Mr. Cloete remarks on the irony of this—the sacrifice of life in a place called after the emblem of peace. Indicating the bodies on the battlefield, "Note it well," Dirk's father says to him, "and do not let anyone talk to you of glory. There is no glory except in the prosecution of a peaceful life, in the worshipping of God, and in the performance of homely tasks." I do not know if these sentiments are shared by the author, but Mr. Cloete is too much of a realist to try to outlaw war from his thoughts, as some novelists of the last war did. The comprehensiveness of his point of view—his feeling that nothing human is alien—is the strength as well as the weakness of this sincerely felt and bravely written book.

A Period Piece. "The Last of Uptake" is a period piece. It is the story of a house, a Palladian mansion in England, fallen on evil days and now inhabited by two sisters, the Ladies Deborah and Tryphena Caudle, not quite the last of their line, but nearly. On a damp, depressing day Lady Tryphena makes a tour of the grounds with her gardener, and this tour gives Mr. Simon Harcourt-Smith an opportunity to describe all the architectural *jeux d'esprit* with which the builder of Uptake and his successors had embellished the place—the bridge, the sphinxes, the Chinese pavilion, the pyramidal icehouse, the grotto, the clockwork figures of the Woodcutter and the Dancers. The inspection over, Lady Tryphena returns to the house, and there follows the quarrel with her invalid sister which brings about the catastrophe.

Mr. Harcourt-Smith's style is a *pastiche* of eighteenth-century models, very highly wrought and almost funereal in tone; and his book which, like all Batsford books, is beautifully produced, has the advantage of many illustrations by Mr. Rex Whistler—drawings not quite in that enchanting artist's happiest vein, perhaps because the humour and gaiety natural to him are a little strained by having to attune themselves to Mr. Harcourt-Smith's more ponderous fancies. It is as fashionable to be reverent to the eighteenth century and the early nineteenth as it is to be irreverent to the Victorian Age, and Mr. Harcourt-Smith might perhaps be criticised for taking too seriously the architectural extravagances of an era which itself regarded them as playthings. Yet there is a certain piquancy in his solemn dirge for Uptake, and if the story which is its accompaniment had been more striking, his little book might have ranked with other fantasies born of a nostalgia for eighteenth-century civility—"The Venetian Glass Nephew," for instance. But the story—a rather commonplace flower on a vast genealogical tree—is only a means to an end, a means to the end, we might say; and what remains with us is just the vision that inspired the author—the passing of a beautiful house.

The Danger of Ingenuity. Mrs. Agatha Christie is subject to the danger that besets all writers of detective stories—the danger of using human beings and their behaviour like clues in a cross-word puzzle. Indeed, she is more subject to it than most of her contemporaries, for she is cleverer than they, and ingenuity attracts her for its own sake. Moreover, she is so good at imitating the surface of life—what could be more lifelike than her dialogue?—that the artificial nature of the stratum below it comes as something of a shock. The shock, no doubt, is mixed with admiration, admiration for her skill in creating appearances that could so deceive us; but all the same we feel slightly resentful of the trick.

Some such criticism might, I think, be levelled at Mrs. Christie's latest story, "The Body in the Library." All the characters, even while incurring our suspicion—some of them positively invite it—behave and, above all, talk so naturally that we are forced to believe in their four-square, honest-to-goodness reality as human beings. The proportion of dialogue to action is very high; besides Miss Marple, the shrewd old lady with her fund of village gossip who does most to unravel the mystery, there is a semi-official investigator, Sir Henry Clithering, and a full complement of policemen; and none of them is of the taciturn kind. Looking back, we realise that, in this spate of words, there is many a sentence, standing out quite boldly, that should have put us on the right track; only the right track, alas! sets such a strain on our credulity. That it should disdain probability is, of course, permitted by the detective-story convention; but in this case it hardly seems to remain within the confines of possibility, which is breaking the rules. Ingenious as the plan was, the chances of its succeeding were infinitesimal. Actually it did miscarry, or the body would not have been found in Colonel Bautry's library and the obvious suspect might have gone to his death. But there was a more serious flaw in it than that, and in real life I am sure that Miss Marple would not have been alone in discovering it. She keeps it to herself, which is just as well, otherwise we should have missed this imperfect, but still dazzling, example of Mrs. Christie's virtuosity.

A Contrast. "Call a Hearse" can boast a good many horrible moments, but none so moving as those in the first scene. The low-toned picture of secure domestic tranquillity is suddenly shattered by the intrusion of naked, shivering fear, and unspeakable things lurk outside in the fading light of a December afternoon. The contrast between the country doctor's prosaic surgery and his lovely, terror-shaken patient with her bizarre story, provides a thrill which Mr. Jonathan Snagge does not quite recapture, although he maintains an uneasy atmosphere, in which anything seems possible, right to the end.

BOOKS REVIEWED.

The Hill of Doves. By Stuart Cloete. (*Collins; 10s. 6d.*)

The Last of Uptake. By Simon Harcourt-Smith. Illustrated by Rex Whistler. (*Batsford; 15s.*)

The Body in the Library. By Agatha Christie. (*Collins; 7s. 6d.*)

Call a Hearse. By Jonathan Snagge. (*Michael Joseph; 8s.*)

GALETTE OF SAUSAGE MEAT.

2 lb. of potatoes.	1 lb. of sausage meat.
3 oz. of margarine.	3 tablespoonfuls of stock.
4 cloves of garlic (optional).	½ pint of milk.

Salt.

Peel and boil the potatoes. Pass them through a sieve and mix them with the milk. Add salt to taste. By means of a wooden spoon cream the margarine and mix it in with the sausage-meat. If the garlic is used, peel four small cloves, put them in a saucepan with the stock (Oxo will do), stir well for a full minute and then pour through a strainer over the meat and beat with a fork until the liquid is absorbed. Grease a soufflé dish, sprinkle with breadcrumbs, and spread in alternate layers the meat and mashed potatoes. Leave for an hour in a hot oven. Turn out and garnish with tomatoes or fried onions.

AMY JOHNSON'S LIFE AS A FILM STORY: "THEY FLEW ALONE."

The schoolgirl with personality and drive: Amy Johnson (ANNA NEAGLE) leads a revolt against the hideous regulation straw hat.

Achievement! ANNA NEAGLE as Amy Johnson after landing on Australian soil at the end of her great solo flight of 1930.

The anxious parents wait for news in Hull: EDWARD CHAPMAN and JOAN KEMP WELCH as Mr. and Mrs. Johnson.

"THEY FLEW ALONE" (at the Odeon), the life-story of Amy Johnson, C.B.E., opens in her schooldays. Her great flights provide the most dramatic sequences, and the strain and stress of such achievements is well conveyed. The late Amy Johnson's include her solo flight to Australia in 1930; her there-and-back trip to Japan in 1931; to Cape Town and back in 1932, and again in 1936, when she regained her record. After her marriage to Jim Mollison she and he undertook joint flights, but had some bad luck on various occasions. However, they are the joint holders of the present England-India record of 22 hours, made in 1934, and together they made the first flight from the United Kingdom to the U.S.A. in 1933.

Joint endeavour: ROBERT NEWTON and ANNA NEAGLE as Amy and Jim Mollison before their joint Atlantic crossing, in which they crashed within sight of their objective.

ROBERT NEWTON as Jim Mollison, the well-known pilot, toasting the success of his wife, Amy Johnson, C.B.E.

Disaster: Jim Mollison crashes on a big flight, only a short time after leaving Port Darwin.

MURDERERS' ROW.

I.—MURDER OF A LADY COMPANION.* By WINIFRED DUKE.

THE windows of Miss Todd's bedroom overlooked the drive, so that she could hear faintly the slow grinding of wheels on the gravel, and a hum of lowered voices, all above the ordinary little noises of a garden in summer. She was in bed, not because she felt ill, but because it seemed the only way in which she could show respect for Fanny's wishes and Fanny's memory. On the day of her funeral Fanny would have wanted Miss Todd to stay in bed.

Fanny Anderson was no relation of Miss Todd's. For thirty years she had been Miss Todd's handsomely paid companion and intimate friend, and her sudden, unexpected death had left the population in the village where both ladies lived aghast, incredulous and deeply pitying of poor Miss Todd. Fanny Anderson was so calm, so determined, so unswervingly right on every given occasion, so knowledgeable, so masterful in a ladylike fashion, that the village could not at first believe that even death would dare to stand up to her, much less conquer her. Apparently, death had accomplished both feats, as witness that black line of mourning coaches winding its way down Miss Todd's drive.

Miss Todd shut her eyes as the procession passed out of hearing, and opened them again after the soft click of the gates had heralded the exit of the last carriage. How understanding of Grier, her old lodge-keeper, to close them until the funeral, shorn of Fanny's hearse, returned without her! Miss Todd felt grateful to Grier. Nothing would have annoyed Fanny more than having the gates left open indefinitely, merely, as she would be certain to point out, in order to save Grier's legs. He wasn't, Fanny always declared, paid to save his legs. Grier had respected Fanny's feelings in a tactful manner. Miss Todd decided that the glow of gratitude which she felt towards Grier must immediately take a concrete form. Should it be a new suit or a present of money? Not money, perhaps. Fanny called presents of money to one's employees pauperising the lower classes. She would certainly disapprove of money; therefore the new suit was indicated. Miss Todd must consult her about that, suggest that she chose it (she would, in any case, but liked to be asked to undertake the trouble), and give it to Grier as Fanny's present as well as hers——

With a slight sense of shock, Miss Todd suddenly recalled that Fanny was dead and never again would choose Miss Todd's presents for her. She had always done so as long as they lived together. Fanny's was such good taste, and, as she so sensibly pointed out, because Miss Todd possessed ample means was no excuse for wasting money. When Miss Todd proposed and was prepared to spend a guinea, Fanny invariably reduced the sum to seven-and-sixpence. She pointed out that the recipient of the gift would not know that it had cost seven-and-sixpence instead of a guinea. Miss Todd used to agree and acquiesce, and suggest that dearest Fanny must keep the change, and after suitable demur dearest Fanny always did. It began to dawn on Miss Todd, at the moment of dearest Fanny's funeral, that dearest Fanny, in addition to scoring during arguments or domestic crises, had emerged therefrom not merely triumphant, but a gainer in a financial sense as well.

The acquaintance had begun in an Italian hotel. Miss Todd, a scared spinster of thirty-seven, just released from years of attendance on an exacting, invalid mother and a lifelong domination by an autocratic father, was finding her belated freedom terrifying and uncongenial. Mr. Massey, the family lawyer, had despatched her abroad, where she felt like a fish out of water. Rome—there she had met Fanny—was hateful. Despite the sunshine on its old-gold house-walls, its history, its pageantry, its beauty, she felt alien, unhappy, and finally fell ill. It was a chill, nothing to be alarmed about, the Italian doctor, in his inferior English, reassured her, yet it necessitated lying in bed, uncomfortable, alternately burning and shivering, longing for home faces and home comforts. She had her maid, but Trimmins wasn't much good, being involved in a promising love-affair with the proprietor of the hotel. Miss Todd had resigned herself to death, when Fanny Anderson walked into her bedroom and her life, never departing from the latter until three days ago.

Miss Todd wriggled uneasily in her luxurious bed. She must not forget how miserable she was in that dreadful hotel, and how good Fanny had been to her, an utter stranger. Why, first thing, she summoned Trimmins and spoke to her about her neglect of her mistress. Trimmins promptly gave notice, which was direly inconvenient, but, in any case, she would have abandoned Miss Todd at an early date in order to marry the hotel proprietor, now her fiancé. Miss Todd had no right to blame Fanny for that. Certainly she had been very kind and capable after Trimmins left. She undertook everything. It was Fanny who suggested that she should escort a convalescent Miss Todd home. Like the latter, she had few regrets for Italy. Fanny was perfectly frank about herself, her antecedents, her position. Her father, she told Miss Todd, the first time she walked into her sick-room, had been a country clergyman who died leaving very little money and an only child—Fanny. Struggling bravely to earn a living, Fanny had obtained a post as governess-companion to the daughter of a wealthy American couple. She was reluctant to say anything against these people, but hinted mournfully at small humiliations and unkindnesses, culminating in the undeserved loss of her job. Miss Todd, touched by the confidence, murmured that the kindness was on Fanny's side. What should she, a stranger in a strange land, have done without Fanny's skilful nursing, Fanny's unselfish devotion, Fanny's thoughtful care? Impulsively, she suggested that Fanny should return with her on a long visit. Fanny demurred, finally accepted, came. That was thirty years ago. For thirty years she had remained with Miss Todd. She made no attempt to find another post—and why should she? Miss Todd was accustomed to be "run," and Fanny "ran" her. She did it so tactfully at first that Miss Todd never discovered that she was being "run" until it had become too late to rebel or object. The suggestion of a salary pained Fanny, but Miss Todd remained surprisingly firm. It was a nice, private arrangement between friends, and nobody else—not even Mr. Massey—need know about it. Miss Todd turned over in bed. What a pity that she, not in the least ill, had to lie in bed just because Fanny was being buried! Rebellion raised his head cautiously. She'd get up at once, and if Fanny were cross with her for getting up——

With a final shock Miss Todd remembered that Fanny was dead—dead and buried—and however much she might disapprove, wherever she happened to be, would have no visible means of indicating the same. If only Fanny hadn't always been so supremely, unswervingly right! If only Miss Todd could once have proved her direly, irreparably wrong! Even this lukewarm, minor satisfaction was denied her through her thirty years of serfdom. Fanny interfered in the house, the garden, the conservatory, the garage. Servants came and left, but it was never Fanny who must be blamed for their abrupt, tear-stained departures. She exercised sway and supervision over Miss Todd's person, her wardrobe, her daily activities, her investments. Even her thoughts did not seem her own property, but Fanny's. Sometimes she wondered wildly why she had remained such a slave. In the end she decided that it was simply for want of the necessary courage to tell Fanny that she must go. Occasionally, visions of financial bribery had danced before Miss Todd's eyes, but she knew that if ever it came to the point she could never face Fanny's aghast anger, Fanny's denunciations of dearest Anna's ingratitude in turning a faithful friend, however substantially subsidised, adrift. Miss Todd had unconsciously braced herself to endure Fanny, to obey Fanny, to be obliged and grateful to Fanny for perhaps twenty years more, until death should release her, when lo! death proved a benefactor in another guise. He came for Fanny, not for Miss Todd.

She put a cautious foot out of bed, following it with her whole person. She dressed herself and left her room. There seemed nobody about, and she gained the garden, all the while casting apprehensive glances over her shoulder, in case Fanny suddenly materialised and ordered her back to bed. She wandered about, drinking in the delicious perfumes of roses and sweet peas, until her meanderings brought her out behind the lodge. Grier was digging in his back garden. When he saw his mistress he straightened his hooped back and saluted her respectfully.

"Good afternoon, Grier. What a beautiful day!"

"Aye, 'tis, Mum. Poor Miss Anderson 's got a fine one for her buryin'."

"Yes. I suppose the carriages will be back any minute. Hadn't you better open the gates?"

"Time enough, Mum, time enough." Grier chuckled. "Miss Anderson ain't 'ere no more to tell me to 'urry. Oh! a great one she was for keepin' other folks up to their dooties. And a mighty sudden call she 'ad, too, Ma'am. Last Sat'day she come down 'ere and made 'erself unpleasant about them cabbages, and she wur took ill that same night and dead two days after, and now she 's a-buried all safe. He! he!"

"What do you mean?" Miss Todd asked sharply.

"Nothink, Mum. Only she won't be a-pokin' an' a-pryin' an' a-bossin' no more. You 'll be able to call yer soul yer own, and other folks too."

"That will do, Grier. Your garden looks nice—not a weed."

"Aye. That noo weed-killer 's the thing."

"Oh, do you use weed-killer? Isn't it—isn't it dangerous?"

"Some say 'tis. I takes care. O' course, the tin 's in the shed. You may 'ave seen it, Mum, when you was in there on Sat'day mornin'."

"I—I was looking at your lawn-mower. Miss Anderson thought you didn't need a new one, but you shall have it."

"Thank'ee, Mum. And I 'm gettin' a bit stiff wiv my screwmaticks for my job. I 'd like to retire, say, on a nice bit o' pension, and move to the other lodge."

Miss Todd's face was grey in the sunshine. Her hands clung to the top of the little gate. "I 'll arrange all that with Mr. Massey."

"Much obliged, Mum. Oh, there 's the funeral comin' back. I 'll just open the gates, and you nip up to the 'ouse by the other path. And don't 'urry. There 's no Miss Anderson to be a-scoldin' yer for bein' out."

There wasn't, but there was Grier. Miss Todd saw herself delivered over, body and soul, to Grier, as she had been to Fanny. She did not return to the house. When, late in the evening, her body was found in the ornamental lake, everybody attributed her suicide to her inability to exist without her friend. Poor Miss Todd! [THE END.

**All the characters and incidents in this story are imaginary.*

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WOMEN IN WARTIME

FASHIONS FOR SUMMER DAYS

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IN the world of fashion to-day the needs of the younger woman who is not as slender as she would like to be are frequently overlooked by the claims of the older woman, although her troubles are no less acute. Swan and Edgar, Piccadilly, are making a feature of dresses for them. There is no monotony about them. The model above is one of the accepted two-in-one affairs. The coatee is not detachable and is of black and blue fancy marocain, the skirt being plain. Furthermore, there are woven angora dresses cut on the simplest lines. A fact that cannot be made too widely known is that dresses bearing the words " Board of Trade Utility article " are stocked here, and they plainly demonstrate that fashions of this character may be remarkably attractive.

FASHIONS to-day are extremely simple; the creators of them have exercised the greatest care in robbing the silhouette of all extraneous decoration, which is really a matter for congratulation. Of course, Utility fashions are well represented by all outfitters of prestige, including Harvey Nichols, Knightsbridge. There are, however, a certain number of dresses and their accessories which were designed and carried out prior to the new regulations; these may be sold. Harvey Nichols are responsible for the simple summer frock illustrated on the right of this page. It is carried out in de-lustred rayon, a material which wears remarkably well. A feature is here made of tailored flannel slacks destined to be accompanied by cheerful coloured sweaters, the scheme being completed by a cashmere jacket picking up the most prominent shade in the sweater.

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